



## *Press Release*

*Office of Mayor Sam T. Liccardo*

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### **Mayor Liccardo Announces Funding to Open San Jose Libraries Six Days Each Week, Providing Safe Spaces After School and on Saturdays**

*SAN JOSE*— Mayor Sam Liccardo today announced a plan to open San Jose’s 23 branch libraries six days a week, beginning July 1.

“Our libraries provide a safe learning environment for thousands of children, even while open only four days a week,” Mayor Liccardo said. “By expanding library services to six days a week, we’ll open the door to learning and opportunity to another 7,000 children each week.”

San José reduced library hours in the midst of a decade of budget cuts so deep that four branch libraries, funded with voter-approved construction bonds, sat vacant for nearly two years. Branch libraries currently operate on a four-day schedule, and are open either Monday through Thursday, leaving a neighborhood without weekend service, or Wednesday through Saturday, which leaves students without library access after school two days each week.

Mayor Liccardo will be recommending funding to restore the six-days a week schedule in his March Budget Message, which will be released on March 16. Funding will come from a combination of reserves in the Library Parcel Tax Fund and the General Fund with a goal of phasing costs fully into the City General Fund over five years.

“Last year, more than 80% of our voters stepped up to approve an extension of a library parcel tax saving \$8 million a year in funding for libraries,” Mayor Liccardo said. “Our residents know how critical libraries are to keeping neighborhoods safe and expanding access to the opportunities Silicon Valley offers.”

Mayor Liccardo made the announcement at the Biblioteca Latinoamericana in the Washington neighborhood just south of Downtown. The library serves students from Washington Elementary School next door as well as residents of the larger neighborhood.

“As a former police officer and substitute teacher, I know our neighborhoods need libraries to be open,” said Councilmember Raul Peralez, whose district includes the Biblioteca. “Libraries spark children’s imaginations and give them a healthy alternative to being on the streets. For parents, they provide access to tools like English classes and literacy services that help them build better lives.”

“Many of our residents rely on our libraries for Internet and computer access,” Vice Mayor Rose Herrera said. “At the same time, many employers require online job applications, even for entry level positions. Our libraries are opening the doors to new opportunities and have become lifelong learning centers for children, families, youth, job seekers and seniors.”

“The number one question I am asked is ‘why is my neighborhood library closed?’” said Jill Bourne, Director of the San Jose Public Library. “Library staff have made this our highest priority, and we are excited to open the doors of all our branch libraries and provide services to our communities.”